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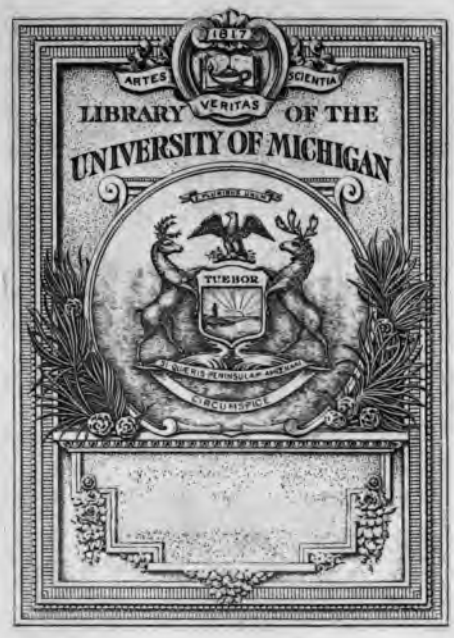
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LETTERS

ON

NATIONAL SUBJECTS,

AUXILIARY TO

UNIVERSAL EDUCATION,

AND

SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE;

ADDRESSED TO

BURWELL BASSETT,

LATE A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES;

HENRY CLAY,

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

AND

JAMES MONROE,

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

BY JOSEPH LANCASTER,

FOUNDER OF THE LANCASTERIAN SYSTEM OF EDUCATION.

WASHINGTON CITY:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR, BY JACOB GIDEON, JUNIOR,

NINTH STREET, NEAR PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE.

Sold by Clement T. Coote, Pennsylvania Avenue.

1820.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, *to wit:*

L. S.

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the fifth day of May, in the forty-fourth year of the Independence of the United States of America, A. D. 1820, Joseph Lancaster, of the said District, hath deposited in this office the title of a Book, the right whereof he claims as author and proprietor, in the words following, to wit:

"Letters on National Subjects, auxiliary to universal education, and "scientific knowledge; addressed to Burwell Bassett, late a member of "the House of Representatives, Henry Clay, Speaker of the House of "Representatives, and James Monroe, President of the United States of "America." By Joseph Lancaster, founder of the Lancasterian system of education.

In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned;" and also to the act, entitled "An act supplementary to an act, entitled 'An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned,' and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and affixed my seal of office, the day and year above written.

EDM. I. LEE,
Clerk of the District Court of the District of Columbia.

77 pm. BK

INTRODUCTION.

"ALL nations, indeed, of which we have any account in becoming rich, have become profligate: a torrent of depraved morality has in every opulent state, borne down with irresistable violence, these mounds and fences, by which the wisdom of legislators attempted to protect chastity, sobriety, and virtue. If any check can be given to the corruption of a state increasing in riches and declining in morals, it must be given, not by laws enacted to alter the inveterate habits of men, but by *education* adapted to form the hearts of children, to a proper sense of moral and religious excellence."——*The late bishop of Landaff's charge to the clergy of his diocese*, 1788.

FRIENDLY READER,

I present thee with four letters on National subjects, either auxiliary or principally connected with the great business of my life—*Education*. I assume not that this nation, is more in a state of ignorance than any other, but advocate the utter extinction of the very last remains of it from among you as a people. Possibly some persons over-prone to condemn whatever does not originate with themselves, may accuse me of flattery, because I dwell only on the bright side; but such individuals may be assured that my determination is never to meddle with any fault I cannot mend. I do not say the American character is perfect, faultless or above the standard of human nature in other countries, but I do not consider it *my* duty, as a *stranger*, needlessly to notice errors common to humanity, rather would I wish to cherish the noblest feelings of the heart among a people I highly esteem.

I remain thy well wishing friend,

THE AUTHOR.

NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.

TO BURWELL BASSETT,

AND THE FRIENDS OF AMERICAN EDUCATION.

NORFOLK, VIRGINIA,
11th Month, 20th, 1819.

HONORED FRIEND,

IN addressing thee, and the friends of education in their legislative capacity, I have two objects to which I wish to claim attention, and both are well known to accord with thy patriotic solicitude:—1st. Measures essential to the extension of the Lancasterian system of education, in its most perfect shape:—and *secondly*, Measures by which the citizens of the United States may increase their intellectual rank as a nation, beyond all precedent in the history of the world. Measures by which a national excellence may be attained in relation to subjects truely scientific and dignifying, not only as productive of great local advantage, but as setting an example beneficial to future ages and opening to other countries the path of knowledge—The march of mind.

Near twelve months have now elapsed since I was honored with thy friendship;—thy spontaneous kindness—and the consequent honors of congress. A quick revolving year reminds me that claims which call for gratitude ought not to be neglected. I feel anxious to make such communications as may prove how deeply I have felt the open-hearted and generous reception which I experienced when lecturing before the national legislature. How can I better express my feelings than by proving

that the general prosperity of this country has been a subject of consideration ever since I landed? The first subject, that of education, is in the line of my professional duty,—in which after twenty-two years devotion, I feel an unabated zeal and enthusiastic ardor, but the important "measures" which may conduce to the general advancement of art, science and national resources, is most consonant to my present feelings. I not only intend to keep the subjects very much distinct, but, in the present case, the first shall be last, and the last first.

In travelling above four thousand miles in the United States—and lecturing to above *fifty thousand* persons, I have seen much for *one* twelve months; yet compared with the magnitude of territory or extent of population, I feel satisfied that all I have yet seen of the character of the people—or the productions of the country, is comparatively small. Twelve months travelling, with much public and private intercourse, cannot warrant me in forming as *too many* have done, a superficial and fixed opinion of the country, which is as various from itself as from any territory of the same extent on the surface of the globe. Far from vain confidence in the acquisition of knowledge respecting a country so new to me in many respects, I would not hazzard an opinion even with much diffidence—yet I am convinced, by the little I have seen, that any contemplative mind under the same circumstances must feel deeply impressed with those natural riches and superior capacities for improvement, which must ultimately raise its rank in the scale of nations; and by the early cultivation of these capacities, may even confer a benefaction on the human race.

It has seemed to me not only possible, but easy, contrasted with the magnitude of the object and result of the design, for such a nation to exert their patriotic and intellectual energy, so, as *to take tribute of all nature on a scale of grandeur which never entered the mind* of any earthly potentate, which is without a parallel in the history of nations or records of science; if the truth of this assertion be eventually demonstrated, knowledge shall have temples reared to its right use, more *universal* and ennobling than that of Solomon, but, like that building, containing emblems and marks of *his* goodness, who not only

still enthrones himself upon the mercy seat, but who fills the temple of the universe with his glory and his presence.—Perhaps the brightest page of human history yet remains blank for Americans to fill, with such vivifying characters as shall, with equal perspicuity and brilliancy, prove to the nations of the world in the full force of demonstration, that "knowledge is power."—Am I then to imagine that patriotism, which in this case is the leading requisite to ensure success, is so small among you as a people, that for want of this pure motive, so generally professed, you can tamely lose an opportunity which is the boon of a Divine hand, and may, by active improvement, cause the fruits of art and science to be poured out in unknown abundance from a cornucopia of unceasing plenty.—If the sons and daughters of your rising Columbia, possess feelings for their country which vibrate in unison with those of a citizen of the world, not a hand will be idle, not a heart indifferent, to the voice of patriotism—yes, the patriotism of man—of country—of future ages, will command attention with a sovereign call. The extent, capacity and resources of a land crowned with blessings will appear as if presented to view by the hand of your national guardian angel, while rising majestically before you, beckoning to active exertion, and saying "*this is the time* "for the welfare of the world and its increasing millions—for "the glory of the God of your fathers—that you should erect "your altars to his honor, who hath done so much for you! Al-"tars and temples—in which all that love knowledge and honor "their God, may behold with instruction and delight the beau-"ties of his works, and call with the sweet singer of Israel on "the rocks and mountains to praise him, of whose greatness "and goodness there is no end. Now may the children of those "men who first floated the banner of national liberty over the "world—arise—rally round the standard of their intellectual "greatness, and fill up with illustrious characters the yet un-"written volumes of your literary and scientific glory.

But before I presume to lift a finger to point the road to this eminence, the very thought of which moves with delight every power of my mind, allow me to say, I have not to submit to thy attention one *imported thought*, except in matters of illus-

trative facts. I am only giving you back your own, in offering suggestions which are of American origin; I may call them the growth of your soil. They have sprung up and matured in my mind since I first trod your shores.—Have originated in an heart formed in many ways to seek the welfare of its fellow immortals.—They were presented to my mind while engaged in expanding and cherishing among fifty thousand of your citizens the love of general education. Indeed, I shall be richly rewarded if these hints should prove indigenous to the future welfare of your children, rising in peace and loveliness around your tables.

To exemplify my object, I shall be compelled to *suppose* some measures realized, that my friendly reader may judge whether the end be commensurate with the expectations already exited; and in the sequel, to demonstrate that the means are easy. Economy, the leading feature of a magnificent national design—the expense in fact, only a few removes from nonentity. The love of science and your country, the only principle of action, which will crown with success a great undertaking—one which I ought to feel myself authorized in supposing a principle as common in this country as the air we breathe or the earth on which we tread.

To this principle of pure patriotism is to be added the power of accumulation even with small means. A power which must become wonderful and mighty, when the hearts and minds of the leaders of your millions shall call into general action those feelings which, if I am not greatly mistaken, it is the wish of the nation to cherish and expand.

This country abounds with the immense riches of nature; the botanical part of these collected by *specimens* into any one or more places, would exhibit a concentration of the materials for this department of knowledge which must stand unrivalled in the face of all nations, if the contribution of articles were but *completely* made from one extremity of the union to the other. In the *extent* of a national collection, embracing every tribe and variety of plants, the benefit would only be equalled by the magnitude of the collection; but what "treasures untold" would be conferred on the farmer, gardner and physician—what

a magnificent scenery would it present to the student of nature and the man of scientific research, were specimens of every soil, and growth collected together? In like manner, what a noble *counterpart* would be presented to view,—the combination and analysis to which *earths* might be subjected, would open new prospects of nature to the experimental philosopher, and tend to perfect a practical theory of soils, and their capacities—a subject of high importance to any agricultural nation, but *to this* nation of the greatest consequence. Formed as these states are by nature to progress in an agricultural population, the power of intimate acquaintance with ALL the soils and productions of the country, is not only of national and scientific importance, but to the statesman and legislator they afford a key to the embryo resources of the land, and enable them to foster and cherish every measure which may cause the light of truth to beam with refulgence on the morning day of the people for whom they legislate.

Suppose the geological and mineral productions of ALL the states, concentrated by a complete collection of specimens, in any peculiar spot—what a field of information? what material for experiment? what authority for literary reference? what a bird's eye view of the wonders of creation, would they present to man?

Materials would be thus concentrated to enlarge various departments of knowledge, which cannot fail to exalt, adorn and dignify any nation, in its possession. The organic remains of the most ancient times would also arise to view, with all the veneration with which remote ages can cover any of their relicts, and *cause* the admiring citizen to exclaim—

"Of one departed world
"I see the mighty shadow!"

The specimens of soils and productions would furnish materials for a map of the *surface* of the land, accompanied by minute tables of the produce. The geological strata, the connection and course of minerals and metals, would furnish materials for suitable maps on an accurate and extensive scale. Here then is the means of forming a *register* of national resources—pointing out an interchange for mutual benefit—a clue to mineral

and metalic treasure. What a scenery of wonder, instruction and delight will such a collection present to the astonished beholder! Is there any item in these measures which, once realized, would not afford a mental feast to every inquiring mind?

If the student, the scholar and the christian may anticipate joy at the prospect contemplated, is there no room for Americans to exult with patriotic feelings, at the distinction which this country may attain among the nations? That nation which shall be *first*, from patriotism and from principle, to realize such national collections, will command the homage of the present and future ages. Will not the eyes of the world, as well as those of the disciples of learning and lovers of science, be turned on a people who may take the lead in such a measure? May not Americans thus teach, by example, nations ancient in history, while their own nation has not yet seen half a century, before they thus take rank in the vigour of political and intellectual maturity? Would not such measures show the world that American genius is of Herculean growth—that it has strangled the monster ignorance, *the curse of nations*, as a serpent in the cradle, and risen to that eminence of mind which alone can qualify individuals or legislatures, justly to appreciate and improve their resources, and place public legislators in the position of men who can *clearly* see, and *firmly* pursue a noble object—men who have attained the art of accomplishing a great purpose by the smallest possible means.—London and Paris may justly boast museums of curiosities, of wonders, that at once astonish, entrance and enrich the mind.—But has any nation ever reared such extensive establishments, at public expense, as national patriotism may rear in America? Yet, my friend, while I anticipate the advantage of such unrivelled collections will be fully admitted, I expect that I may be *told* that the warmth of a generous heart has carried me into the imaginations of a fairy land; that you, as a nation, have not the resources to defray the attendant expense, or the energy to effect such stupendous measures as those which may leave the mature institutions of scientific Europe at a distance. As to the question of expense, a little patience will shew that it is the *patriotism*, and not the *pockets*, of your citizens for which I am forming a

plan of *taxation.* As to the want of energy, I must respectfully avow myself not disposed to credit the existence of such apathy, till time himself, with his grave countenance and unbending firmness, shall do more than I expect—shall tell me that your energies are *dead*, not *dormant*—that your patriotism is made only of gun-powder, and the largest proportion of this stock has evaporated away amidst the shoutings of battle and clamour of victory.

There are three common methods of raising such museums—

1. At the *national expense;*
2. On individual risk;
3. By donations of the possessors of curiosities.

The last affords me the foundation of my hopes. With the exception of suitable buildings, little or no national expense is likely to be essential to produce a splendor of result which shall eventually exceed the most sanguine imagination.

In this case the first object is to find proper persons to make *selections;* secondly, to transport them to their respective depots—and, thirdly, to have the articles arranged in proper museums for exhibition, at a price for admission which will *support* the establishment.

If each of the national representatives and senators were to unite with himself a few intelligent friends, as a local committee, to make selections of specimens in his district—the representatives taking charge of such articles, to transmit them to head quarters, for a WASHINGTON NATIONAL MUSEUM—the yearly attendance of the legislature would bring an aggregation of articles, gradually increasing beyond estimation. The representatives to the state legislatures would surely do the same in their states and duplicates might be exchanged, then every state legislature would have, at some central place, a state museum. The exchange of duplicates of natural productions of *one state* for *another*, must produce an interchange of good offices, and replenish and carry the national museum to perfection.

But it is not the members of the state legislatures and national representatives alone to whom this appeal should be made. The physicians and medical men of the United States have ge-

nerally an inclination to scientific research—they are mostly well prepared, by a knowledge of chemistry and experimental philosophy, to become patriotic agents in such a public spirited undertaking. The officers of the army and navy, the civil magistrates, the members of literary societies, the judges of the supreme and state judicatures, with counsellors at law, and last, though not least, the planter and agriculturalist, all possess opportunities of enriching such a treasury by making selections and suitable inquiries after specimens.

Do you as a nation, wish to possess a million of samples illustrative of the national resources of your country? Are there not twenty thousand of your sons, anxiously alive to your interest, possessing patriotism enough to make selections and in many instances to convey them to the appointed spots, or in all cases, to see their safe carriage? Have you not a steam boat conveyance on your rivers and on your lakes for several thousand miles? Have you not a regular line of coasting trade, offering a facility of intercourse equal to its extent? Is there a master of a steam boat, of a coasting vessel, or of a land carriage line, who would not often volunteer the conveyance, carriage free, of a few pounds weight of valuable specimens? Surely if the thing may be only proposed and understood aright, tens of thousands of citizens would volunteer their services both for state and national selections. If in a *few* extra cases, the bulk of articles, should require expense, may not a small local subscription generally be made to pay half price, for which the public spirit of carriers might be called on to convey such materials for public service.

De Witt Clinton has distinguished his government by his energetic exertions to complete the grand canal. What a line of intercourse does that canal present? How readily may the treasures of nature be brought from the Hudson, the lakes, the St. Lawrence, the Mississippi, and ten thousand tributary streams of smaller note, which feed these great waters, all of which may be employed to bring the tribute of a nation to the treasury of science? In regard to inland carriage, the judges who go their circuits, the counsellors that follow them, rest in general at certain central points, to which the most intelligent

inhabitants of the district often resort for the purpose of justice; this measure will furnish a patriotic subject of inquiry, in the intercourse which attends relaxation from the purposes of duty, when at the point of contract with people possessed of local knowledge, and willing to give information. Do not for a moment suffer it to be imagined, that I consider the American nation as *destitute* of museums; there is one in Philadelphia and one in Baltimore, and *perhaps* some in other cities, which have arisen from the labor of individuals, whose trouble in raising such institutions do them equal honor as men, and friends of science. So far from these being neglected, I should recommend ALL being aided and enriched, by public zeal; still this leaves ample room for national, state and college museums. It is not to find or create the charge of remissness that I take the pen; it is from a wish that such institutions should rise to that wonderful scale of perfection, which the public sense of duty in a nation, is alone competent to call into action, on a bearing commensurate with the riches of its resources, and the dignity of its future days.

With your hundreds and thousands of fellow citizens engaged in public duties, *professedly patriots*, guardians and friends of your public interest,—is it possible that your energies are so dormant, so incapable of being roused, or so unfit for combination and energy in any thing but revolution and war, as to furnish no fulcrum on which the lever of public interest may rest, and by which measures for national good and honor may be put in motion? Let who will be the first American to believe this assertion, I hope I shall be the last European to admit the conclusion as correct. I am ready to say, away with the thought—it is too degrading, nay, ignominious, for any man to cherish or attach to a generous spirited people.

Will not patriotism find among your sea captains and merchants cheerful hearts and active hands by thousands, to search for articles for such museums? Will not your pilots port their vessels with more pleasure when each American navigator can lay his hand on his heart and say with exultation, that not a sail is ever unfurled, or does the flag of his country float on

ocean, sea or river, but to bring some wonder of art, some treasure for the museum, which shall be a light to the world and a glory of his people? If the patriotism of your national and state representatives will only rear the standard of science;—is there a true American from the youth of your colleges to the most virtuous leaders of your nation, that will not glory in its elevation, and swell the train of its supporters? Hitherto the powers of nations have been combined almost only to make or resist aggression, but are *all* the energies, sacred to humanity, to be monopolized by war and be everlastingly devoted to render the earth an aceldama, a field of blood? Is the sword to devour forever?—or are the sons of liberty and science *now* to join hand and heart in collecting those materials which shall contribute to increase the welfare of mankind—and the light of knowledge a thousand fold?

If it be needful for those who are to guide the helm intimately to know the power and resources of their country, surely this measure, as effectually concentrating these things in a focus before them, is worthy their candid attention and cordial support;—Is not this advantage to be obtained by the simple expense of a museum which would pay its charge of building, by a small price for admission?

It seems proper that in making selections *nothing* should be omitted that may be useful. The analysis of soils most barren as well as those most fruitful, affords double means of instruction on one subject. A few years past a quantity of lime was laid on some land in England—the greater quantity laid on the land, the more unproductive became the harvest. That lime, usually considered as a means of fertility to the land, should render it barren, was to the parties a matter strange and new. Specimens were finally sent for analysis to Sir Humphry Davy; he made the experiment, and gave a solution to the enigma—the lime was found to be blended with magnesia. The presence of magnesia in the lime shewed the existence of a principle injurious to vegetation. Here then is a simple article rendered of great *local* importance to the benefit or detriment of agriculture, as magnesia lime stone exists in this country. Marl is another article capable of fertilizing the earth in exhausted

soils. It is of great importance, especially in a wheat country. It may often remain useless *only* because unknown. The present Vice-president of the United States, has on his land at Staten Island, a specimen of stone marl—the stone is often dug from under the surface, and often found near it. It gradually breaks and decomposes itself when exposed to the air, and finally becomes equal to any rich vegetable garden mould. In how many other cases may this *very* advantage *now* remain unimproved? The *very* stones which are better than any manure, perhaps being *picked out* at a considerable expense, and thrown away as an incumbrance to the ground, and then manure laid on at much cost. Iron is a very common ore, yet boundless as its quantity is in England, the iron of Sweden is *indispensible* to the perfection of some of the English manufactures. Does not this important difference in a common metal, indicate the propriety of collecting specimens of *iron* ore from *every* possible extremity of a country that ranges under so many degrees of latitude, as the United States? These observations are made to impress the importance of attending to small matters—their weight will be corroborated by the consequence which *fuller's* earth,* (clay, in its pure state, without admixture of silex) is to the English woolen manufactures, in the estimation of the British parliament, as to cause heavy penalties to have been formally enacted to prevent its exportation. Surely this valuable article needs to be known and its existence in every place marked out.

Many more instances of equal importance may be found. To look at what cloth manufacturers call the TEAZLE,—a rough thorny thistle, can hardly appear more unimportant; but it furnishes an article for finishing cloth of so much consequence that a person has been known to travel part of France with a view of procuring a quantity of this article for English consumption. Teazles present a number of exquisitely fine points for raising the knap on cloth, which no experienced artist working in steel could possibly manufacture at such a price as to be

* Clay appears a common article, and may be therefore despised. But the clays of this country are often blended with *iron*. To find clay free from this mixture is almost indispensible to the perfection of pottery manufacture.

of any use, if he could make them *at all.*—Such a national selection should be on a scale which may shew that nothing is *too little* or *too great*, for the proper notice due to forming into regular classes the articles in a grand museum, for the purpose of teaching an admiring world what patriotism is capable of effecting for a country like yours.

The *principal* object in such institutions should be *domestic resources*, but this would not preclude foreign* additions *as a branch of the museum*—duplicates of natural treasures being collected, would serve, in many cases, as mediums of exchange with foreign countries, so as to render an intercourse which should be a mutual benefit,—a means of adding the specimens of the world's resources, to those of the nation.

Every ship that sails from the ports of the United States, may be made liable to a small extra duty, unless some natural curiosities, according to required general notices, be presented by the captain or merchants. This duty should be small, but sufficient to induce a desire to *avoid it*, on the easy terms of bringing such foreign specimens as might easily be accessible, which in every case, should be deposited at the custom house, prior to the clearance of the cargo. The inhabitants of Salem, New England, afford an instance of a museum, formed on a small but respectable scale, by *voluntary* contributions from the sea captains bound to the East Indies.—The instance is worthy the citizens of a town, well known to be alive to any thing good or useful. But, as the national scale will be extensive, the levying of a trifling duty in case of no specimen being produced, would add to the fund; I am, however, inclined to doubt the propriety even of any *taxation* except on patriotism, and that I would wish to see, most noble, as being altogether free and unshackled.

The names of doners who render important benefits, to be registered in the institution, in a record of honorable services: those who render the *most* important benefits, to be annually reported to the legislative bodies and their names published as an example.

* In most countries, *foreign* specimens form not a branch, but the majority, of articles in a public institution.

Whenever an American citizen, goes to a foreign country, as a passenger, and returns without a specimen or deposit at the custom house, *a small duty* levied in such case would be paid with pleasure—averse as I am to any taxation on this subject. If money is to be raised for a national building by public duties, such as bear on foreign pursuits appear the most natural objects.

Before I close this communication allow me to make one more suggestion.

There is not a finer country in the world for landscape scenery than America.

Abundance of persons can be found capable of drawing *an outline*, in a nation which is yet in infancy, when to find the same number able to make a perfect drawing, would be a difficulty.

But the collection of great number of *outlines* may be a nursery of the art of *design*. Let patriotism call on the daughters as well as the sons of the country, to present *sketches* in the rough state—*simply* of correct sketches of scenery *from nature;* let these outlines be forwarded, post free, to a proper office at the national museum; and, without expense, a gallery of outlines may be formed of all the landscape scenery of the United States, on such an extensive scale as to gratify and astonish. A book of references may be kept of the names of the authors, but not published or exhibited without their consent.—In all cases a reference to be expected for the *correctness* of the design. The young artist might thus have access to all the beauties of scenery which natural landscapes in outline can furnish. More perfect and finished specimens need not be rejected as patriotic presents; but a gallery of outline would gradually prepare the way for a perfect school of design.

Engravers should be requested to forward specimens of all their engravings to the same depository, as affording a criterion and record, of the progress of the arts of design and engraving in this nation.

These hints may appear to bear only on the genteel accomplishments of drawing and painting, but they equally apply to

the arts of design for manufactures;* and, *ultimately*, domestic manufactures, requiring the arts of design, *must* grow and flourish in this country. Were the French art of lithography generally used, copies for other museums might be multiplied at a small expense, and without number. Surely this grand improvement will not be neglected in the United States!

Will the display of legislative and individual patriotism requisite be a sacrifice? No! every exertion of patriotic feeling operates as capital placed out at compound interest. Eventually, *all* the colleges may have their museums to aid and illustrate their professors when lecturing on natural and experimental philosophy—their cabinets of metals, minerals and plants to illustrate the bounty of Providence, and point out the means of improving the land: but in the galleries of out-line, as well as in the foreign specimens to adorn the temple of science, the youth of the schools and colleges would repay their parent's efforts—they would carry the benefits reaped from national patriotism into the bosoms of their family circles—they would turn social converse into an intellectual feast—they would botanize in nature's garden, and present the most fragrant flowers and precious fruits to the eyes of those whose love of their country had sown the seed, of which they would deserve to reap the precious harvest.

I appeal to thee, my generous friend, who first taught me to appreciate that warmth of patriotism with which a Virginian heart can glow, for the following circumstances:—A large quantity of shells are often found in the neighborhood of Williamsburg; they are a specimen of large fluted *oyster shells*, known to abound and extend to Choptank river in Maryland, yet *this* species of oyster is wholly extinct in the neighboring rivers, abounding with the common oysters; affording a strong indication of a great revolution, that could thus extinguish one species and make room for another. The accurate extent of this bed is a subject worthy of examination and report. In the eastern states, amidst primitive rock formations, this species, now

* Calico printing, paper hangings, floor cloth patterns, and porcelian, damask table cloths, and many other articles of manufacture, all depend for their success on the arts of design.

extinct in James' river, is yet to be found. At Richmond, *shark's* teeth are often dug up, and but rarely, *if ever*, preserved. In England the mines of coal often present vegetable and fossil remains. Do such instances occur in the mines of Virginia and Pittsburg, and are they lost and neglected? Do not such examples as these establish the fact, that *nothing*, which can be made useful or *instructive*, ought to be omitted in the formation of such a national institution?

In case any prospect of success should be likely to open in consequence of these suggestions, I shall be happy to give such hints and information as may be in my power to forward the object; but my wish is only to point the way and render any auxiliary aid, leaving to your native genius the task of travelling the paths of light, and ascending, with an eagle-eye, to the meridian height of scientific discovery.

I have now so greatly occupied the attention of my friends on the subject of public and state museums, that I must defer that of *national education*, and the extension of the Lancasterian system in the United States, to be the subject of another communication. I hope, however, to succeed in shewing that, if you possess the will, as a nation, you have the power of banishing ignorance from the mind of every child within your borders—of rendering future generations children of light, who shall walk in the splendor of seven-fold meridian of day.

Having attempted to discharge the duty of gratitude, in contributing my mite to promote your country's prosperity, I mean speedily to show that the Lancasterian system of education possesses superior powers of utility to those generally known in this country,—which I hope may soon derive every good it can present in the greatest perfection. And now my honored friend, Burwell Bassett, grateful for thy hospitality and kindness, a well wisher to science and knowledge, to thy country's prosperity and thy own, a friend of every man worthy of being *thy* coadjutor or compatriot,

I remain, very respectfully,
As a citizen of the world,
Thy friend and fellow citizen,
JOSEPH LANCASTER.

NOTES.

NOTE 1. Since the preceding letter was printed, I have had a communication from the *respected* friend to whom it is addressed, by which I find he has personally ascertained, that vegetable impressions are frequently found on the coal of Virginia. Most likely this geological feature is to be found in coal mines over the world.

NOTE 2. A member of Congress from Kentucky informs me that, in his country, a kind of yellowish clay is frequently prepared for its particular use, by immersion in water; a decomposition takes place, and a yellowish scum is separated, by effervescence; after which the residue is used for white-washing houses, and such is its adhesive power, that it never wears away, but remains as fast as paint. He thinks that this quality would render it serviceable in the manufacture of porcelain.*

NOTE 3. As the *Capitol* advances to its completion, the present wooden buildings which are used as offices will become useless. If sold they will produce but very small proceeds, but by being removed to some convenient place may last a considerable time, and be sufficient, without much expense, for the *commencement* of a Museum at Washington,—a Museum which may afford eventually, a nobler monument to the memory of Washington, as a friend of his country's liberties, than any column, however admirable its architecture or costly its marble!

Since the above was written, I have *tasted excellent tea*, which grew in the interior of the United States.

* Communications on such subjects will be very acceptable to the author.

NATIONAL EDUCATION.

TO HENRY CLAY,

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES U. S.

"May the children of those men who first floated the banner of national "liberty over the world, arise, rally round the standard of their intellectual "greatness, and fill up with illustrious characters, the yet unwritten volumes "of literary and scientific glory." *Letter to Burwell Bassett, Niles' Register, vol. 5th, new series*, 1819.

WASHINGTON CITY,
22d, of 12th Month, 1819.

HONORED FRIEND,

INTERESTING views of general education, and collateral means auxiliary to the conformation of national character, require to be grounded on practical TRUTHS. To elucidate the subject on which I make this communication, I respectfully refer to the record of *ages*, as evidence in point to the truth of my propositions. History teaches mankind that many nations have *declined* in morals as they *increased* in riches; for their *public intellect* and happiness diminished in proportion as they deviated from that simplicity of manners, which contributes to the true wealth of nations. The most eminent lawgivers of antiquity illustrate this national truth. CYRUS, who overwhelmed one empire, and established a greater dominion, was as distinguished by virtue as conspicuous for power. His energies and success were derived from simplicity of practice and character. The judgment of SOLON was, that "riches brought luxury, and luxury introduced TYRANNY into a nation." SOLON was a true republican—for when he

happened to be in the court of the monarch of Lydia, whom he saw arrayed in purple, enthroned in splendor, and surrounded with magnificence, the rich CRÆSUS asked the wise man if he "had ever seen any thing more glorious?" Solon, feeling nothing but contempt, for the guilded toys and playthings of a court, answered, "yes! cocks, peacocks and pheasants." This reply prevented his being retained at the palace, which he quitted, yet leaving behind him the forcible impression of a truth, the repetition of which saved the life of king Cræsus, when the revolution of time had brought on him the visitations of calamity and defeat.

The same simplicity was inculcated by Socrates, who on observing a young citizen absorbed in pursuits unworthy an immortal mind, exclaimed, "BEHOLD A GOLDEN SLAVE." PLATO was an example of moderation; he refused a purple robe when presented from a king, saying "I AM A MAN, AND SCORN SUCH EFFEMINANCIES." LYCURGUS, by his precepts, laws and example, reared the foundation of Spartan greatness. His institutions were not characterised by those refined distinctions which Burke terms "the Corinthian capital of polished society." The purity of motive and power of example, induced men to yield a ready obedience to his laws. Simple, as mighty, must have been that mind which, in a dark and benighted day, reared a political edifice capable of bearing the convultions of society, and braving the storms of time for four hundred years! These references are made to *revive* in thy classic mind, the chain of connexion which may be found in the sentiments of great men, on subjects relating to the rise, progress, or ruin of national character. The original influence of government in antiquity was chiefly applied to a small population. There is one eminent exception, that of MOSES, who led SIX HUNDRED THOUSAND persons from the darkness of Egyptian bondage to the glorious liberty of a free people. An experiment under these striking circumstances, on such an extensive scale of numbers, in a day when political science was in its infancy, could not be very likely to originate with man. The case required the miraculous interpositions which distinguish the enterprise, to crown with success an undertaking, involving so great and sud-

den a transition in the condition of a numerous people. This instance is adduced, not as a case absolutely in point, but as one too important to be left entirely unnoticed. MOSES, undoubtedly, had to legislate for a people, in point of numbers, greatly superior to the early population of Greece or Italy; but, perhaps, a greater change was never produced in the manners of a *small* nation, than that effected by means of NUMA POMPILIUS. His talents were those of a legislator, who taught by example what he enjoined by law. He shone forth as a sunbeam on one of the darkest days in the history of man, and his precepts seemed to carry the conviction of light in their progress. In a limited measure, according to his knowledge of religion, he brought *eternal motives* into action, and thus infused into his institutes a vigor beyond his laws. The obedience he exacted was prompt and peaceble, diffusing the smiles of serenity over the face of a nation for forty years. The consequences ended not at that period, for Numa headed the march of mind to after ages, while he brightened an iron character by the superior polish of his own—a polish which lasted till the Roman material wore out in the progression of centuries. The early Romans were a lawless banditti; Numa not only possessed the superior civilization of the Sabines, but added to that superiority by the virtues of his own great mind. His legislative practice, exemplified the power of combination, by uniting the energy of the Roman character with the arts of peace and agriculture. His object was not a warlike design, or love of conquest—No!—forty years peace infused his own mild principles into two nations, whose amalgamation was to him, more glorious than a diadem. The praises of Numa were once recited by the little children in Rome, as those of another great man are uttered in America. Children learn to lisp the name of their *father* and their *country* in the same breath. Thus it was with Numa; and so, with nobler materials and more important consequences, it is as to a WASHINGTON. States or empires, that have arisen to power or eminence, are known to have taken their moulding and finish of character as much from the forming minds of their legislators, or great

men,* as from any other favorable or peculiar circumstance in their day. Man is by nature a creature of example, and when the principle of virtuous simplicity prevails in the mass of the people, then the early fathers of a nation reflect their lustre of pure motives and dignified mind, to future ages.

It is said that "history is philosophy teaching by example," and history indicates that there is a peculiar period—a precise point of time, at which rising nations take a decided cast of character: an era when early virtues and patriotism become national—are interwoven with the uniform and constitutional feeling of a community—gather permanent strength, or sink into the imbecility and decrepitude of a premature old age. If there be a period which occurs in history, more replete than any other, with interest and instruction to statesmen, philosophers and friends of humanity, it is the one at which the formation of character first takes a *definite* direction. A question of some importance, may be asked, whether this power, as applied by the legislators of antiquity, may not be acted on by the united energy of a people who are their own lawgivers? In fact, whether the people, and those they elect, by wise and judicious means, may not be able, under the Divine blessing, to mould and form the character of the rising generation, and future ages, to wisdom and integrity, to the developement of talent, the expansion of mind, the maturity of virtue!—I am no advocate for the *wild* doctrine of the *perfectibility* of human

* Extract of an inscription on a monument in the Guildhall of the city of London, to the memory of PITT, EARL OF CHATHAM, the powerful advocate of American rights, in the British house of peers.

"The mayor, aldermen and common council, mindful of the benefits which the city of London received in her ample share, in the general prosperity, have erected, to the memory of this eminent statesman and powerful orator, this monument in her Guildhall, that her citizens may never meet for the transaction of her affairs *without being reminded*, that the MEANS by which *Providence raises a nation to greatness* are the virtues infused into the minds of GREAT MEN, and that to withhold from those virtues, either the living or the dead, the TRIBUTE of ESTEEM and VENERATION is to deny to THEMSELVES, the MEANS of HAPPINESS and HONOR."

N. B. When *the writer* of this letter mentions "GREAT MEN," he has no allusion to any greatness, but that which is generated by virtue, truth, piety and talent.

nature by any inherent power of its own; but as far as human institutions are susceptible of excellence in point of time, their effect on the mind of nations seems to have commenced at the instant of growth and *decided* formation of character. Thus we perceive the medium by which *eternal wisdom* has destined the combined mass of uniform feeling in society, to take those impressions and features, which at once brighten, distinguish and ennoble the aspect of a nation.

On one occasion in England, a political empyric, whose name is too contemptible to be repeated in any letter to *thee*, predicted, from long drought, with exultation, that, in six months, bread would be at a price in London, the amount of which and famine were synonymous terms. Never was a fortune-teller more out in his prognostics—rain was long delayed, but still came in season: for had it not fallen as it did, the harvest must have been ruined. When the clouds poured out their fructifying showers, the grain was just forming and beginning to fill. Almost every ear of wheat became double in weight, and nearly four-fold in number of grains. This circumstance first taught me the agricultural consequence of rain, at the precise instant of formation, to the fruits of the field.—So with the richness of mental harvest; a nation's future abundance depends upon the well timed influence of wisdom, operating like "genial dew and fruitful showers," at the *critical* moment on which, the most important future consequences may depend.

Whilst Virginia retains its name, may *hospitality* never cease to be its motto. When lately enjoying that hospitality at Williamsburg, a collection of maps commanded my attention with an interest so lively that I shall not soon be likely to forget the cause, or the effect, for I was looking at the map of North Columbia, from the Atlantic to the Pacific ocean. Under an introversion of mind arising from this view of the nation, I involuntary contrasted the first settlement at *Jamestown* and *Plymouth*, with the present States and their ramifications. Contemplating the increasing spread of the population of the United States, I was ready to exclaim "here is an ample footing for another *Atlas*, not merely to stand, but to *travel* from

one immense ocean to another with the world and its interests on his shoulders! What an unparalleled national capacity for extension and power! With a destiny so grand, how momentus the importance of forming the national character, while YET plastic, to its eminent prospect and future grandeur!

When crossing the Atlantic, involuntary admiration often burst forth at the power and goodness of the gracious Creator, in forming the great deep and supporting the innumerable millions of its inhabitants; for mercies surrounded us above, beneath, and on every side! We met many vessels steering different ways, and often distinguished or spoke to those bearing the flag of independence. We naturally associated the colours of a SOVEREIGN PEOPLE with the memory of those intrepid men who first reared that standard, and said to the present and future age, "BE FREE." Thus, whether I contemplate the extent which your vessels traverse at sea, or whether I examine the march of your population, and future extent of domain, I feel like a man astonished, for the first time, with a prospect—sublime enough to leave at a distanee, the solemn effect under which the mind succumbs, on a first sight of the Alleghany mountains, or the rushing cataracts of Niagara! May those measures be taken in this early day, which shall build up the energies of a nation, travelling on, in the greatness of her strength, from the sea to the RIVERS,* from the rivers to the ends of the earth!—Only fifty years past, and *that* man possessed a daring mind who had intellect to foresee, or intrepidity to speak of an independence which is NOW the boast of every heart, and the theme of every tongue! Above one hundred years prior to the revolution, certain principles, sacred to liberty, had taken root among you. In many respects the colonies had local and divided interests, but these principles afforded a natural subject of sympathy—a common ground of feeling. A stroke was inflicted at one end of the colonies, and the shock vibrated to the other. It passed through the hearts of multitudes to the remotest point, as by a common conductor of unison in kindred

* Mississippi, Ohio and Missouri.

nature. The growth of the principles of liberty had been that of a seedling, slow but sure; their maturity was that of an oak, the strength of which was ultimately tried in competition with "Btitannia's idol tree." Common feelings and interest constitute the basis of a national character, and it was in the cradle of these that your independence was nurtured, and by these your maturity will be perfected. Thus was produced that awful conflict, which fixed every eye in Europe with anxiety on the interesting scene of action—on the event of a contest which, during its progress, clothed many serious minds of each country in deep mourning; but when an overruling power brought forth your liberties with the sweet influence of the "Pleiades, of ORION, of Arcturus and his sons," the rising constellations excited the admiration and called forth the gratitude of all who admire the beauties of Heaven, and adore the power who maketh "the clouds his chariot," controuls the storm, and saith to the waves of the sea "PEACE, BE STILL!" The records of time scarcely present an instanee of the energies of a total revolution of power, subsiding into quiet with so much rapidity; but our wonder is lessened when we consider that it originated, not in party but in principle, not in the effervescence of an occasion, but the consolidated wisdom of inheritance—not in ill will to the mother country, but in love to that which gave birth to a people, who were far from being deficient in knowledge, or dead to liberty. The establishments of your state and national governments, have been attended by a peculiar characteristic unknown in the annals of man: without an equal in the modern science of legislation. Colonies have been formed by European powers, not as children training for maturity, but as a species of political idiots, requiring to be kept in subjection, pupilage and dependence, and compelled to pay ample tribute for the power exerted as prerogative, under the mask of protection.—*You colonize yourselves.* Your new settlements arise to maturity, they become independent states and members of the great confederated family. The new states legislate for their local good, and possess their voice in the national interest. Could TIME, *personified*, be

asked the question, he would say this is anomalus; a fact standing *solus* on his records. When we consider that thirteen states may multiply to one hundred, what a responsibility does it place on those who take the lead in the offices of the present day, deeply to consider what measures can be taken to mould the character of a future age to the map of possession and station of dignity! Is not the time arrived? Has not the era commenced on which your cast of future character, *not as to present reputation*, but *future, national* and mental energy depends? Emancipated from the trammels of infancy, and past the chaos of a revolution, you have arisen to your place and taken rank among the nations. You possess principles which only need perpetuation to give permanency to the power of institutions—the basis of which requires to be simplicity and wisdom, and knowledge and virtue! One essential means to attain this great end, is the *utter* banishment of ignorance from within your borders. To crown this object with success, surely nothing should be esteemed completely done, till the infant, who has *yet* first to lisp the name of his country, may glory, as he learns to speak, that, as to elementary knowledge *at least* not *one* uninstructed child can be found to pollute the soil of liberty, with the footstep of ignorance!—You *must* ultimately arise to great eminence, not only as an agricultural, but commercial, manufacturing and scientific nation. *It seems the decree of Heaven*, and man cannot reverse it. The raw material, which experimental science requires to render utility to the comforts and welfare of man, has actually been developed, so as to increase its powers several hundred-fold, within four centuries. On ascending to the rank of nations, you are greeted by the intellect of ages; the genius of human happiness presents you a cup, rich with mental luxury. Arts, sciences, manufactures and commerce, are now at a new era in their progress. It is for you to enrich your children, and your children's children, by giving to them, *universally*, such an education and conformation of character, as may enable them to serve their country by *the power of mind*—to blend the wisdom of ages with the vigor of a nation's youth! Do you not possess won

derful means for increasing the materials of knowledge, and rendering much more splendid and serene this intellectual period of the world.* Surely, you will *now*, call forth the noble ardour, which alone can improve these superlative advantages.

Youth acquire the elements of learning, but they too often stop at that point; the knowledge of elementary principles, indeed, afford the basis of all combination in art, science, or philosophy; but elements are of little use without their application. America has a great destination, capacity and power given it by Almighty Providence! Surely it will be wisdom that the education of youth, after the elements of instruction are once attained, consist in such a course of general knowledge of men and things, as may best comport with the destiny, character and pursuits of the country; for an acquaintance with the arts of life will often determine the mind to that line of action which may prove most congenial to its feelings and abilities. It is a defect, not only in the state of education in this country, but over the world, that much general knowledge is acquired without an index, arrangement or connexion; consequently it is left diffused and unavailable, when it ought to be concentrated so as to be called into action upon emergency. Much knowledge may be in possession, and the power of association will revive it incidentally; but the ability of that memory and mind must he furbished to great brightness, that can summon its associations, and apply general knowledge to specific objects, *at will*. To *promote* this end, systematic education, must consist, not only in the course of study, but in its practical application.

While the character or qualification of teachers of youth is left to chance, undervalued, or not adapted to the great trust committed to their charge, the mind of the rising race must suffer in proportion as their teachers are disrespected, unqualified or degraded. Any measure that may be devised to improve the condition of teachers, without enhancing materially

This subject has been specifically treated, in a letter to BURWELL BASSETT, on national institutions, to which I now refer *thee*; the motto to this communication is an extract from the same.

the cost of education, will be a national desideratum. It is a singular fact that professions which require talent, are rarely entered upon without a course of study; or rendered productive of support, unless recommended by experience. But it seems any person may become a school-master without preparation, or proper qualification, to a country's loss. This evil requires a remedy.

The renovation of old ideas, often affords to the mind as much gratification as the acquisition of new ones. True classic taste, whether ancient or modern, can speak a volume in a sentence, a simile or a word, but the powers of art always pay tribute to those of nature. Correct classic taste delights by the associations it renovates, by the knowledge it revives, as much as by the instruction it bestows. Scripture classics are superior to all others. They never travel out of the line of propriety, and in affording proofs of inspiration, present to view a deep knowledge of human nature, a sublimity of scenery, connexion, and object without a parallel. They possess an elegance suitable to a subject, where nature lives and breathes in every sentence, and the countenance of a Deity sheds its benign lustre over every line! I have often wondered, that when elementary education is finished, the beauties of scripture truth, as to dignity of style, purity of morals, and majestic views of omnipotence, are not made the first lessons of regular instruction. If I am favored to rear an institution of my own in this, my adopted country, so deeply do I feel the importance of first impressions on the youthful mind, that this will be an object of peculiar attention, not as a *sectarian*, but as a Christian, a teacher of youth, and a citizen of the world. Here I could enlarge on other topics, but I wish to avoid details at present, as I have promised to enter upon them, as connected with national education and the Lancasterian system, in a *second* letter to my friend, Burwell Bassett. In addressing the present communication to thee, I have been solicitous to dwell only on the general topics of universal education, as connected with national prosperity.

To the American people, "knowledge is power, liberty and peace!" Every circumstance or means which can be rendered

conducive to its promotion, will, I am convinced, be estimated by thee, and men of congenial minds, as rendering more legible, a grand clause in the constitutional charter of your happiness. Next to the possession of information, it is of no small consequence that knowledge should become *a circulating medium* among you, and I hope the day is not distant when your public spirit will induce the training of lecturers on chemistry, experimental philosophy, mechanics, and the arts of life, the constellations of Heaven, and the treasures of the earth; in connexion with some public body to sanction their movements, and prepare their reception over the union. This will revive the dormant knowledge of the aged, confer the blessings of instruction on the young, and, seconding the universities, systematically spread over a mighty people the radient streams of intellectual acquisition!

In all these views of the subject, it is essential to keep in mind, the necessity of associating every good with that simplicity, which was inculcated by the precepts of those extraordinary men, whose examples do honor to the human species. Infinite wisdom has ordained, that the bones of children are more liable to bend than break, as they have little burthen to support, and need facility to their growth. In after life the case is different. The Divine foresight has decreed that a decided conformation takes place, which gives firmness and vigor to the full maturity of the adult man. It is thus with new states, young in legislation, weakness often attends their *first* movements; time and experience mature mental, as well as animal strength. When we consider that children, if stinted in their food are weak and dwarfish in their growth, and ever after subject to constitutional imbecility. Thus we may appreciate the weakness attending the advanced age of a nation, if its early advantages have been neglected. If a nation's good principles have not adequate nutrition at the period of their growth, the opportunity once lost can never be re-called; for there is no such thing in nature as second growth, though there may be second childhood! Perhaps the period is already at hand, when the weight of instructed mind in a nation, will be estimated by the statesman as part of its effective strength, the maturity of ability

and experience, contributes much to the treasure and welfare of a country—a simple truth, but long disregarded in ages of political ignorance.

Skilful anatomists tell us, that such is the wisdom displayed in the equipoise of the muscular powers of man, that the vigor which moves his body and directs his steps, thrown, in the *least* direction out of the equilibrium that controls them in operation, would turn their energy against the very body they are intended to support, and breaking the bones, as pillars of the living temple, crush the whole structure to ruin! It was a similar misdirection in mental pursuits, that in early ages, united pride with the possession of knowledge, and perverted its best objects to selfishness. Thus practical mathematics were contemned; and YET they teach men to measure the earth and span the visible Heavens—mark the boundaries of an estate, a country, or an empire—measure the paths of the navigator on the trackless deep—contribute to the perfection of mechanics and machinery, thus enriching the cabinet of art and science, the treasury and wealth of nations. These all *were* accounted inferior, menial and degrading pursuits, from the ancient philosopher to the more modern effeminate noble. Even Archimedes, who distinguished himself so eminently by inventions in practical mechanics, left no record *of them* behind him. PRIDE, misdirecting the mental energies of men,—prevented a practical application, of some of the grandest discoveries since the dawn of science to the useful arts. Thus men, society and nations, during many revolving ages, were deprived by mere PRIDE of much of their mental power—as bodies, whose muscular system out of equilibrium, are bereaved of their natural strength.

Let it not be imagined, that I consider the American people as destitute of a national character. I see *too many instances of uniform feeling*, to convince me of the contrary, however, I am equally satisfied, that this is an era at which is to commence its decided form and perfection. This subject is one so highly interesting, as a legislative example to mankind, that any friend to the race of man will find it impossible to avoid solicitude, that the foundation already advanced may be

so deeply laid, extended and cemented, as firmly to support a structure which may stand for ages, a PHAROS, a wonder to an admiring world, shewing forth a light which may be hailed as the auspices of hope to a thousand nations! America acts independent of precedent, for the *whole* people are sovereigns, lawgivers and legislators for themselves. When a father is possessed of a large estate capable of great improvement, he wishes judiciously, not only that his son and heir should be well educated, but be made fully acquainted with the estate he is to inherit, its capacities for improvement, the means of increasing the produce and enhancing its original value. This elucidates the effect which national education ought to produce on the minds of youth. The share which every citizen holds in his country, being only a joint part in the original value and increasing income of a national property. Education can never be considered as complete, when it is not universally applied to advance the interest of the country, as well as qualify the individual for the duties of society. I am not a native, yet I am no alien to the best interests of America. No small addition has been made to my happiness among you to find that party spirit moves softly, and men of opposite opinions mostly deal in mildness and urbanity toward each other. It is with heart felt pleasure I have experienced the noble and generous candor of the minds of men, who care not from what quarter, or from whom good originates, provided the country they love is exalted and enriched by its possession. Such men can botanize in the garden of the world, and with scientific skill, select the most fruitful exotic plants, with a design to render them indigenous blessings to their native soil. A peculiar advantage to this nation is that equality of vote and interest which opens the way for virtue and talent to raise to its right eminence, or find its proper level. Had this simplicity continued in ancient Rome, Jugurtha, the corrupt Numidian prince, would never have had reason to say, "its senate might be purchased if any man could be found rich enough to pay the price." It is not an establishment of schools at national expense which I recommend, but I call attention to the imperious necessity there is to watch, direct and perfect, for public good, the course of study; and the

principles inculcated on the minds of youth. Those *essentials* which shine in your constitution, or conduce to future prosperity, ought to be engraven on the heart of every child who breathes the hallowed air of freedom. Thus the privileges of the fathers, may be transmitted, an unblemished inheritance, to their children. So it was with Rome, the simple and dignified virtues of a *Numa*, after more than two hundred and fifty years, were found emblazoned on the heart of a CINCINNATUS. One of the most eminent English friends to the American revolution, delivered a discourse on the improvement of the state of mankind, in which he earnestly urged a particular attention to education. He considered it a subject with which we are yet but partially acquainted, and asserted, THAT "A SECRET *may* remain to be discovered in education, which will contribute more than any thing *yet known*, to improve the condition of mankind." It may be boldly maintained, that whatever advantages are to be derived from improvements in education, or a *wise* direction of study, the benefit to be anticipated will depend upon the GENERAL application of its power to that body of rising intellect, out of which is to be formed the legislators and patriots—the great men of a future age.

You who are the elected leaders of a people, capable of following in a field of glory which shall be more excellent "than mountains of prey," and, compared with which, the achievements of heroic ages will lay their proud trophies at your feet, must be aware that the homage of every thing that bears the name of virtue, or goodness, awaits you as the rich reward of those energies which your country requires to be put into action, in a day that calls for diligence, to rear successfully the superstructure, and bring forth the graceful corner-stone of your political edifice, sacred to all that man can enjoy, having on the entablature, the hallowed inscription of "peace on earth and good will toward men."

DEMOSTHENES said that "man's happiness was to be like GOD; and to resemble him, we must love truth and justice." But the world needs a great *national* precedent of the application of this and other grand truths, to *legislation* in *perspective*. It is for America in taking rank among the greatest of nations

to exemplify the beneficial effect of wisdom on a scale that has never before been known on earth.

May it not be considered as a moral *certainty*, in a nation where principle, and piety have long operated with leavening effects—that whatever measures are taken, to promote these objects, advantages will eventually be realized, which the most renowned ancients never anticipated, even under the most fertile flow of their vivid imaginations.

I hope the union of *any* church with your state policy, *never will* exist, to curse your blessings. Yet the mild and lively spirit of Christianity, is not less valuable to mankind, and especially to *your* rising youth; because of the errors, and intolerance, or bigotry, which too often characterize national establishments.—For too often indeed, has pride, wealth and power, caused church establishments to raise their proud crest and plumes, in array against liberty of conscience, and the progress of knowledge, and thus intemperate zeal, has inflicted severe and deep wounds on the vital interests of humanity. Exempt from this evil, corrupting as the magic of Egypt, education may freely wing her flight over your happy land. Her friends may rejoice that in her progress, free from party spirit, and every narrow *sectarian* motive, the mild and benignant influences of Christianity, will always be introduced to the minds of young persons under the fostering influence of education, "AS A LIGHT THAT HATH GONE FORTH IN BRIGHTNESS," "a salvation WHICH IS, *as the lamp that* BURNETH."

I remain, very respectfully,
Thy obliged friend,
JOSEPH LANCASTER.

P. S. The following verses on the Lancasterian system of education, recited after a lecture in Congress hall, may be acceptable, and therefore I insert them.

"The Lion o'er his wild domains
Rules by the TERROR of his eye—
The Eagle of the rock maintains
By FORCE his empire in the sky.

The Shark, the tyrant of the flood,
Pursues his prey with quenchless rage—
Parent and young, unwean'd from blood,
Are still the same from age to age.

Of all that live, and move, and breathe,
Man only rises o'er his birth;
He looks around, above, beneath,
At once the heir of Heaven and earth.

Force, cunning, speed, which nature gave
The various tribes throughout her plan,
Life to enjoy—from death to save—
These are the LOWEST powers of man.

From strength to strength he travels on;
He leaves the lingering brute behind,
And, when a few short years are gone,
He soars, a disembodied mind.

Destin'd his future course sublime
Through nobler, brighter, paths to run;
With him, the final end of time,
Is but eternity begun.

What guides him in his high pursuit,
Opens, illumines, cheers his way?
Discerns th' immortal from the brute,
God's image from the mould of clay?

'Tis knowledge, knowledge to the soul,
Is power, and liberty, and peace;
And, while celestial ages roll,
The joys of knowledge shall increase.

Aid, then, the gen'rous plan,
Which spreads the light with universal beams;
And through the human desart leads
Truth's living, pure, perpetual streams.

Behold a new creation rise!
New spirit breath'd into the clod—
Behold, the voice of wisdom cries!
Man, know thyself, and FEAR THY GOD."——*Montgomery.*

TO JAMES MONROE,

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

WASHINGTON CITY,
22d, of 1st Month, 1820.

HONORED FRIEND,

PERHAPS it is almost impossible for a contemplative mind to find in the wide world, a country more interesting to any friend of the human race, than that of which thou art President.—Not to feel a solicitude for its welfare,—not to endeavour to contribute, though only a mite, to its prosperity, would indicate a strong alienation from feelings of kindred nature common to the family of man; and from those lovely Christian principles which incline the hearts of their followers to regard every nation as their own, and every man as their brother.

The origin of the government of this country—its advancement in the rank of nations—its capacities and future relations, mingle delight and surprise, on anticipating prospects, conducive to universal peace, or on perceiving the fruit of human happiness yet within the germ. Subjects so copious, continue for no short time to present "*visions of glory breaking on the view*," for the constitution of this country exhibits to the world, the astonishing results of a principle of government, applicable not merely to a single state or people. but to an increasing *family of nations*. Europe, in common with the world, has been divided into separate states, but in assuming the principle of independence, no friendly point of contact, no centre of union, has been left, to preserve peace. This separation without a general bond of connexion, only opened the doors of selfishness and ambition.—The sceptres of the earth have been swayed over the fields of desolation, and man, unhappy man, has been the victim, whose flesh, and whose blood, fed many

of those *heroes*, who have not aided to make mankind a peaceful family, but a family of murderers! The principle on which your alliance is founded, affords a perfect contrast, for while it is perpetuated and observed, there can be no war among the states which compose the union.—A circumstance which alone will conduce more than a multitude of other advantages, to give security to property, and that on a scale of extent, of which the world presents no similar example; for the foundation principles of your constitution connect independence with union, peace with prosperity. DIVINE PROVIDENCE, that *Omnipotent arbiter of nations*, has reserved to this country, the privilege, the high honor, of introducing to the world, a rule of government, which facilitates the growth of independent states, and so combines their interests as to prevent the sword being drawn to settle claims or disputes. Could the curtains of Heaven have been put aside at the commencement of this era, then the lovers of their country, might have seen the angelic hosts strike their harps, and have heard the harmony of the *seraphic* choir, who sing together on every *new* advance of peace in the world!—Surely joy, thanksgiving and the voice of melody would have been heard on that day, which ushered into the world a principle of united government, *capable* of filling your continent with an aggregation of peaceful, civilized, and independent nations. What HENRY, the great of France, proposed as matter of arbitration, your constitution exhibits as preventive policy, and on the continuance of this bond of union, as the sheet anchor of peace among you, seems to depend the opening a new door of hope, for a creation which has long groaned in pain under wounds that still bleed. The plaything—follies of a court, the baubles of a monarch's palace, the despicable envy and intrigues of corrupt statesmen, have often opened the viens of nations and written the iniquity of these fiends of ambition, in crimson characters. I have turned with horror and sickness of heart from the records of human butchery, which mark the fields of a Cressy or an Agincourt, a Ramilies and a Blenhein,—an Austerlitz, a Dresden, a Marengo, or a Waterloo, to look for a country in whose political institutions, the germinating seeds of peace are sown! From what I have seen, I rejoice to find in this country indica-

tions of a soil in which may grow plants fit to adorn with beauty, and enrich with fruitfulness, the Elysian fields of human happiness. Never before did history present to the inquiring mind, the character of a nation, which possessed such a power, of extending its territory without annihilating the principles of liberty, by the increase of dominion. But it is thus, hopeful America, is capacitated to widen its empire, enlarge its boundaries, and if I may use a beautiful scripture allusion, increase the number of its citizens "like the stars of Heaven for multitude, or as the sand on the sea-shore." The phenomenon of your history, presents an aspect of mild principles still in operation, calculated alike, to increase your power, and multiply your blessings. As your constitution encourages nothing of a predaceous character, what a splendid addition may be made to the great things already registered of your true glory, if this nation shall advance step by step, state by state, till the boundary of its actual patrimony, shall only be limited by the Atlantic ocean on one hand, and the Pacific on the other Extending the principles of union and amity, till the rising states become a numerous and mature brotherhood of nations, the foundation of whose government on the borders of the Atlantic, was concord; the fruits of whose prosperity on the Pacific, will be peace.

In thus making a *pacific* march to a *pacific* ocean, you will unavoidably come in contact with many tribes of Indians; that contact, will be frequent and intimately blended with your national interests. These sons of the forest claim the attentions which are due to man in their situation. Considerations for their welfare have often engaged my best wishes, and among the highest gratifications, I have enjoyed at Washington, it has been a peculiar satisfaction to see in thee, a man, whom the Indians call their *father*, sincerely endeavouring to prove himself their *friend*. Nor was this pleasure a solitary one, for I perceived a unison of heart on the subject, among many members of the legislature and officers of the executive. Eastern customs frequently alluded to in the sacred volume, show it to be unusual in approaching the chief of a nation, to offer congratulations, without a present, however small. I have nothing

fit to present but the fruits of experience in education, which may be acceptable on this subject; if they revive pleasing or useful recollections, I shall have great pleasure in having made the offering of my good wishes. In India a common salutation is "clear sky to you." As this is an Indian civility, I quote it on an Indian subject, trusting that no storms may becloud the serenity of that horizon, under which education may be likely to spread—knowledge to take root, and civilization to extend its blessings among those tribes, who call thee, their father. I have often observed particular instances of *individual* progress in school, adduced as evidence of *general* proficiency, but time and experience taught me the fallacy of this conclusion. The late Earl Stanhope, whose love of mathematical and mechanical knowledge, made him friendly to every improvement, once observed to me, "that a unit can do no more than stand in a units place, unless other figures written or implied added to its consequence by increase of quantity," and on this position he grounded the invention of a very curious arithmetical machine, in which I have seen him put in the multiplier and multiplicand of a large sum, and then by putting his machine in motion, grind out the product, which always came forth with accuracy. This observation applied to another subject, has often convinced me that it is the total quantity of the rubbish of ignorance removed, the general amount of improvement actually made, that can alone demonstrate the ability of a teacher, or the goodness of a system. The efforts for the civilization of the Indians however excellent have been as units, compared with large sums, or individuals with a nation. To succeed extensively, it appears time, that the friends of the Indians should promote instruction and civilization so as to *act on the mass.* To fix on central points from which civilization may make its circuits; for this general purpose a larger fund may ultimately be required, than the finances of this country in these eventful times may be able to afford. Allow me then respectfully to suggest, that in all *future* acquisitions of territory from the Indians, *five* or *ten* per cent. of the land so acquired, be left in reservation to accumulate in value, while the surrounding land may be sold, and when the increase is such

as to warrant disposing of these reservations, sales may be made and the proceeds invested in United States' bank stock, as a fund in addition to any grant for the improvement of the Indians. Thus a principle may be adopted independent of purchase money, as annuities, which will increase the means of civilization and in this respect accelerate the advancement of national resources. While advocating the cause of these adult children of nature, who have not yet travelled beyond the rudiments of society and legislation, I see no cause to be sanguine of great and *sudden* success. Slow movements must attend any motion against the stream, for even the power of steam diminishes in velocity, by the impediments which adverse currents present to the vessels it propels.

Habit strikes root in the human constitution by the accumulated practice of years, therefore much effect will not be expected among the mature Indians, yet every point gained with them, will be a step taken by favour of their influence, to forward the welfare of their children. Discouragement ought not to repress exertion, because of the difficulty which attends selection, of the proper medium for directing the progress of moral improvement, the nearest way to the human heart. The unfavorable power of first impressions to be counteracted, derives its chief force from the influence of society, and improvements introduced by the aid of a social principle, can alone present a counteracting and adequate remedy. Individuals from uncivilized nations, have acquired the first elements of improvement in superior society—returned to their native country, and standing alone amidst all the contrary influence of early prepossessions and recurring habits, have soon sunk under the antagonist operation of every social feeling in the society by which they were surrounded. Such circumstances demonstrate the consequence of primary *impressions*, point to the necessity of seizing *them*, as a lever, and poizing the moving power on the social principle, as on a fulcrum, likely to change the direction and influence of custom. Endeavours making to improve these untutored sons of the forest, so as to make your connexion beneficial, by blending with all your transactions the benevolent feelings of kindred and fraternal nature,

cannot fail to confer as much honor on the authors, as good on the objects. Love and kindness act powerfully on minds in a state of simplicity, and consequently gratitude is more lasting. This truth is demonstrated by the manner in which the Indians cherish the memory of WILLIAM PENN. Such a line of conduct in the executive and legislative branches of government, as may evince motives for their happiness, cannot fail to make good impressions sure, and bind them fast, so as to introduce those measures, which in a future day shall change the course of habit and conduce to a state of society, more favorable to agricultural, than hunting pursuits. Facility may be given to this desirable object by a watchful care, that contaminating influence shall be as little interwoven with the knowledge communicated to them in education, as the nature of human imperfection, will allow. As agency in tuition is attended with considerable expense, from the manner in which teachers have been accustomed to live, *is it not possible to economize this expense*, by raising from *among themselves, agents to promote this object?* An Indian teacher would not only live at less expense, but be more acceptable to his own people, than a stranger, and Indians are acknowledged to possess that intelligence as learners, which implies no want of capacity if properly trained, for the office of teacher. The course of study to which it will be most eligible to direct their minds, after the previous elementary attainments are made, and the construction of lessons and materials adopted to this purpose, will be found worthy of careful and minute investigation. LINNEAUS, the father of Swedish botany, and the founder of that scientific arrangement which concentrates, connects, and pourtrays the collected beauties of an earthly Eden before the minds eye, operated so powerfully by example on the youth of his country, that wherever the young nobles of SCANDINAVIA, were found travelling for many years afterwards, they were sure to be zealous botanists, anxious to advance that science, which the superior genius of their instructor had placed before them as an exalted object of attention. The amiable and plain character of Swedish youth, facilitated such impressions, and it is likely that the simple feelings of unsophisticated nature, may furnish individual cases,

of anxious agents for the instruction of others, in those branches of knowledge, which example and experience may teach them rightly to appreciate the benefit. The importance of forming the female character, by a special instruction, is so prominent, that it cannot escape attention, but it is greatly enhanced when we recollect that the force of first impressions, rests mostly on the amiable feeling of a mother's heart,—that feeling which can delight in the lisping of an infant, and listen, and long to listen again, to a childs first attempts to speak,—that feeling which softens and melts at every little sorrow, complaint and want, which brightens the maternal eye at each new effort for improvement, and rivets to trifling exertions more attention and solicitude, than that, with which the disciples of Socrates, and Seneca, listened to the last precepts of wisdom, falling from the lips of those revered and expiring philosophers. If experience in education, knowledge of human nature in youth, and a lively interest for your national happiness, qualify me to recommend professional subjects, allow me to urge that the means of education already provided for females among the Indians, be *redoubled.* While manual, agricultural and mechanic arts are taught to boys, let increased care be taken to inculcate every domestic art or improvement, which can subserve the purposes of domestic comfort, and industrious employment, and thereby add to the invaluable and impressive force, of an active maternal character.

The course of study to be pursued, when children have acquired elementary knowledge, in reading, writing, and arithmetic, to be complete, must be definite, and commensurate with the objects to which it is to be directed. To form the character, to generate new habits, to store the mind with ideas favorable to a new state of society, are objects which all require to be systematically raised, on that foundation, to which the early rudiments of instruction are but preparatory steps. Unfold then the book of nature, bring forth before the rising youth in schools, a view of animate and inanimate creation. Let this summary of instruction, end in pointing the attention of the pupils "from nature, up to nature's God," and thus literally enlarge the view of the Indian, "whose untutored mind, *sees* God in clouds, and *hears* him in the wind."

If it be true, and true I believe it is, that man becomes a more civilized and intellectual being, in proportion, as he enlarges his stock of ideas, and applies his knowledge to the duties of life, then *this* proposed series of instruction will operate as that of Adam did in Paradise, an instance which ought to prove an example to all persons concerned in education, as being serviceable to *any* youth, but to Indians who have been nursed in nature's lap, its application will be still more impressive. The world and all its inhabitants,—the seas and all that dwell therein, present a peaceful, civilizing line of subjects, for instruction, which are at once calculated to extend the range of mind, cultivate the understanding, and cherish the best affections of the heart, to God and man.

Agricultural pursuits, and mechanics, connected with the same object, simple buildings and the arts of life may form a course of theoretical instruction, which should be practically elucidated. To promote civilization extensively, mechanical, as well as agricultural schools are needful, and the blending of theory with practice, will render both more valuable. Schools of industry have often been attempted in Britain, and have but rarely succeeded. Competition in a market, the want of a lively interest in the acting agents and salesmen, the loss of markets, or the absorbtion of what ought to have been recurring capital in dead stock or bad debts, have many times produced disappointments to designs, otherwise not only congenial to industry, but praiseworthy and excellent. What is required among the Indians are schools of industry, in which children shall be taught *how* to work, without consumption of materials of a costly nature, or risk and loss, in manufacturing for market, instead of their own consumption. Ploughing matches may be made for a reward between school boys, the ploughs being adapted to their strength. The race for a prize with a plough will be as powerful in its reaction on the mind, as competition between any two boys for an apple. Suitable medals given for success in such efforts, though of inferior metal and cheap price, would be preserved as ornaments and badges of honor, through succeeding periods of life, and revive and rivet the first impressions on the mind, every time they were examined or

remembered. However useful the association of theoretical with practical instruction, in a course of study, yet there is another important measure to crown the work, for the bright eye of an Indian is evidently capable of being fixed on a particular object, so as to indicate the habit of exercised *attention*. The facility of aiming at a mark, so as to be nearly sure of their prey, as soon as they see it, must be grounded like all other human attainments on exercise.

The improvement made by the Indian children in a school on the Lancasterian plan, corroborates *this* fact. Writing is the medium of instruction; they cannot make a letter without fixing their eye on the stroke, and in writing *they* excel. Children of nine years of age, usually learn to read, write, and understand the four rules of arithmetic in twelve months.

Pictures with relative lessons afford easy means of riveting the attention of the learner, by rendering the course of study interesting and impressive, as they often convey that perspicuous instruction, by one glance of the eye, which would baffle the genius of man, to describe in the compass of a volume. The union of optical and vocal instruction, gives an additional importance to the effects, which characterize the principles of the Lancasterian system. A most powerful degree of knowledge may be communicated to multitudes of Indian youth by printed etchings, in outline, which may be executed at a small cost, and be afterwards coloured by children. But were I to enter into details on this subject, the pages of a memorial would not suffice—a quarto would be in insufficient. My chief solicitude is to call thy attention to general principles, without entering minutely at present into the consideration of important, though subordinate matters relative to Indian improvement.

The more *general*, instructive ideas are rendered in *any* school, the more the social feelings which always give a weight to important impressions, become embodied, produce a greater mental re-action—a more speedy result—and future right direction. Acting on this principle, you will move on successfully with your peaceful object, and pacific march; you will gradually bring into view of the Indians, a micro-

cosm of the world we inhabit. The data of knowledge among them, will be increased, new ideas favorable to the advance of a social era will be multiplied; thus you will improve the force of first impressions, and consequently, the precepts of wisdom will descend on their minds, with an increased power of gravity. Commencing among youth, so as to combine the powers of picturesque descripton, with recitation; a greater effect will be produced individually,—the embodying of which, with a social principle, will enlighten the "mind's eye," before it can be darkened by the gloom of the forest, and before the affections of the heart can be absorbed, by the furious feelings attendant on the love of the chase. Thus you will grasp a new power, which may operate on the minds of this interesting people, and render the yet unvitiated and undirected energies of their youth, subservient to the promotion of general welfare. Improving the condition of the Indians, will render them your friends and allies, and give them cause to look to future Presidents of the Union with the pleasing anticipation of finding in them, official guardians and true friends.

This is a cause in which I aim not to lead, but assist, and if I were to choose a motto adapted to the occasion of this address, it should be "I SERVE." Ideas are often the seed of action; and to promote civilization, the object of the friends of the Indians is not to instil notions, which promote a warlike disposition, or cherish the love of false glory. Encomiums on brave warriors, and the parade with which historians varnish the horrors and evils of victory, abound so much in common school books, as to render them unlikely to incline the hearts of youth to love a quiet habitation, or rejoice in the works of peace. Various as may be the sentiments of *many* friends of these people, respecting the lawfulness of war; yet it may be presumed that *none* of them, would wish to cherish dispositions favorable to it among Indians; for in the encouragement of schools among them,—in the training of teachers,—in the construction of lessons,—in the adoption of plans to accelerate their improvement,—in directing the course of their instruction, or in rewarding their proficiency with medals, the objects in view

are identified with the most peaceful policy in which a nation can be engaged.

The observations I have submitted to thy attention, are general, and founded rather on my own professional experience, than on any personal acquaintance with the Indians; whenever I may obtain such an acquaintance, I hope I shall not be negligent in improving every suitable occasion, conducive to the welfare and happiness of a people, so deservedly objects of thy kind attention. In addressing thee, on this subject, I have considered thee as representing many friends of the Indians, and I have frequently expressed myself in the plural, for in this case, as in any other that is virtuous and good, I am satisfied thou would feel a great regret to stand alone. I trust, therefore, thou will receive this communication as addressed to thee, on behalf of every advocate of Indian rights throughout the nation. To present unmeaning compliments, would be quite as foreign to my object, as to thy wish, but having formed an attachment to thy native country, I naturally incline to finish an address to its chief citizen,—with sincere desires for it prosperity and happiness. The eagle wing of its mighty influence, will be ere long extended from one ocean to another, and in taking its flight, these natives of the woods are sheltered under the shadow of its wings; they become adopted children of the eagle, and may they *never* be forgotten, neglected or oppressed, nor have just occasion to appeal to him, who in the might of his power holdeth the thunders of Heaven in his hand, and in the condecension of his goodness, "heareth the young eagles when they cry."

Franklin objected to the selection of the eagle as a national emblem, on account of its being a bird of prey; but that eminent philosopher, however, remarkable in general, for accuracy of judgment, seems, on this occasion, to have forgotten, that an emblem cannot be unworthy a nation which inspiration has formed sufficently expressive, to pourtray some of the most benign attributes of omnipotence.

The state in which a superintending Providence found this nation,—the rank to which it has been raised, and the further eminence to which it is destined,—the leadings of the hand of

supreme mercy,—the many instructive events in its history,—the manner in which it has been preserved, all bear some degree of resemblance to that peculiar goodness alluded to in the scripture history of a most ancient nation. "The Lord's portion is, his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an *eagle* stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; *so the Lord alone did lead him.*"*

I am rejoiced to find peace and righteousness, springing up and promising to flourish, in the councils of the American nation towards the Aborigines of their country. In leading on in this great work *may thou* be bold, and blessed, as to every step of thy progress in a cause, which there is reason to hope ascends in the view of omnipotence, as incence at the foot-stool of him whose delight is mercy,—whose name is *love*. The consolations which arise from benevolent actions, when grounded on a pure motive, resemble the honey-dew of Heaven, descending to shed its sweet fertilizing influences on the increase of talents, auxiliary to virtue;—which, like the fruits of true piety, as sacred laurels, mantle round the living head,—beautify the bier,—and grow greener on the grave.

May peace rest on thee, and thine, is the sincere and farewell wish of thy

Respectful friend,

JOSEPH LANCASTER.

* Deuteronomy,—Chap. 32, v. 10, 11, 12.

TO BURWELL BASSETT.

LANCASTERIAN INSTITUTE, BALTIMORE,
29th of 2d Month, 1820.

HONORED FRIEND,

ACCORDING to my promise, I again call thy attention to the important subject of national education, including the advantages of the Lancasterian system of instruction, as adapted to American youth.

These interesting objects become more momentous, when we consider, that in your state and national representations, at least three thousand legislators annually assemble for deliberation. This number is so often renewed, that in the course of twenty years, near thirty thousand persons are likely in succession, to occupy that station, from the multitude of changes by secession, decease, or new elections. In the English representative bodies, during the same period of time, not more than three thousand persons will be required to fill the same station, as the elections are for seven years, and the peerages for life. In this country, you know nothing of septenial parliaments, or hereditary legislators; this difference in your constitution, has augmented your representation with the increase of your people. Between the multiplied population of the old, and the addition of new states, it is not unlikely, that the total number of delegates over the Union may now be nearly double the amount, at the establishment of your independence. Double your states, and you will require sixty thousand persons, to be qualified, to fill the highest stations which a free man can honor or occupy in his country. Add to this your judicial officers, and civil magistrates, you will require two hundred thousand persons qualified to be your agents, and representatives. Under such new and changing circumstances, that your state legislation and wisdom, may become synonimous, universal education must interpose its preserving power. There is

no country in the world, *but this*, in which the people have such weight in the government, and that government so constituted, that none of its privileges can be perpetuated, nor any of its institutions possess stability, but as they are rooted and grounded on knowledge. Let any man search the habitable earth, and find, if he can, another nation, whose future prospects and prosperity, depend upon education to an equal extent. The period when those principles which are to constitute the future character of a nation, become predominant, is the precise instant for blending with the national feelings, the full sense of the importance of universal instruction, and the most active zeal for its promotion. Now is the time, for the conviction of future grand results to strike deep root in the public mind, for the principles of philanthrophy, piety and patriotic feeling, to rally the whole nation, from the rising youth, to the venerable old man, under the banner of knowledge. On the subject of timing measures of such consequence, I have dwelt largely in my letter to HENRY CLAY. Definite measures, now come under consideration. How can education be carried to scientific perfection?—How can its elementary benefits be extended to all the children of a nation?—Where population is dense, proper measures may easily be effected, where the district is thinly peopled, a difficulty will impede their progress, and yet the latter sections of a country may afford some of the brighest and best "gems of genius," which ever adorned a nation, or caused mankind to rejoice. The first consideration, is to bring the subject home to the heart of the nation.—Let all the leaders of the people, editors of newspapers, or periodical works, combine their energies, to promote general attention to the subject,—to revive and rivet in the minds of their fellow citizens, the dormant conviction of its advantages, so as to impress them more clearly, and render the impression firm and lasting.—To leave a good principle as an inheritance to the future age, the minds of young men of the present day, require to have this subject familiar to their view, clothed with light, in all its bearings. A few repetitions of this public measure, in unity of action, would so instil and ingrain the minds of men with the subject, that nothing short of the extirpation

of the whole nation, could obliterate those feelings which evince knowledge to be the best pillar to the constitution, as giving perpetuity to its benefits.

Any great work must prosper, when it finds a friend, a potent ally, in the conviction of every heart. The friends of education need be under no alarm, about the demonstration of its civil and moral effects, provided they are zealous in promoting its utility on a national scale.

The establishment of national schools in Scotland, was attended not only by a total change in the moral character of the nation, but produced a re-action on the minds of the rich, in favor of education, and at present so popular, and universal, is the sentiment in its favor, that if a man should neglect to educate his children, he would become a bye word and reproach to the whole community. Even the inhabitants of a village, would feel themselves under a similar reproach, if they did not erect suitable school edifices and give proper encouragement to teachers. This re-action, and accumulated degree of public spirit, has produced an effect, superior to the legislative energy which gave it birth. In consequence of general education, Scotchmen have carried their talent to the market of the world, and commanded their price. Like the industrious bee, they have winged their flight over the fertile fields of the earth, and gathered their honey from innumerable flowers, to enrich their parent hive. What has been the consequence of improved morals, increased knowledge and industrious exertion? Does not Scotland's mountains and fastnesses present to view, plantations, as forests of beauty, bursting by surprise on the vision? Do not flocks whiten those plains, the stillness of which, once was interrupted only by the prancings of the war horse and the shouts of robbers.

The wilderness and the deserts of Scotland, now rejoice and blossom as the rose, and instead of the briers or thistles, to offend and render nugatory the cares of the husbandman, immense fields covered with grain diffuse their fragrance, and beautify the scene around.—Inhaling the breezes, as the breath of Heaven, they seem to bend their heads, as if in silent gratitude to that sovereign majesty, by whose blessing on the knowledge

and labour of man, they give evidence, *how* the barren waste, the trackless desert, the almost impervious glen, may become a lovely garden, a fruitful field! Reflection teaches us, that this effect has been produced, by making knowledge accessible to the *whole* community, and by impressing the *entire* nation, with a lively sense, that their individual interests, and those of national education are identically the same. Scotland, by the union of the two kingdoms, lost its own parliament, and merged its political interest into the vortex of British legislation Education alone has done ten fold more for its local influence, than it lost by the consolidation of its government with that of England. Here is an example for America! In the reign of king William it was a rare thing to find a private Scotch soldier, that could read and write, and now the very same people carry talents which knowledge has matured, to every market in the world, as if they possess an ambition to become purveyors of *brains* to the universe! The effect has been *slow* but *sure*, nor did the advantages of education appear eminent in Scotland, until in the second generation, an educated race of parents, seconded every measure for the effectual instruction of their children. Before sixty years had passed, Scotland received more than compound interest, for every mite of capital expended in the instruction of her youth. Ignorance and anarchy were banished together, the peaceful smiles of knowledge, stimulated improvement and gave security to property.—The rent-rolls soon exhibited annual increase enough to make the heart of any landholder, long after a similar possession, while industrious occupation, and intelligent tenants became abundant, and crimes so rare that the appearance of a criminal, excited as much attention and surprise as that of a Comet. In this country, you have materials to act upon, possessing a more mature character for knowledge, than existed in Scotland at the commencement of parochial schools. With this advantage you have to hope, that *more speedy* success will crown your work, if you seize the opportunities of the passing moment with patriotic ardour, and extending your hands with determined zeal, place them on the plough and look not back; but bless

with tillage, every little spot, or barren waste, and sowing the seed of knowledge, reap the harvest an hundred fold.

The Emperor of Russia has published an account of the Lancasterian system in one of his court gazettes, and sent it over the empire from Petersburgh to Kamtschatka. Siberia with its frozen rivers, and accumulated snows, furnishes instances in which the Lancasterian system already opposes the softening influences of knowledge, to the deep-rooted barbarism of ages, amidst the chilling rigour of the most inhospitable climate, to be found on the surface of the globe.

To extend to America, similar, but *more* accurate and improved knowledge of the Lancasterian system and its advantages, the public support will be more powerful than a royal mandate, and for this object the subscription for publishing an epitome of the system, to which thy name stands *first*, will, if properly supported, realize the object over the union. I have the pleasure of presenting thee a list of subscribers, as respectable as ever any publication has yet been honored with. That the system should be without enemies would be an unparalleled instance in the history of improvements. That cold hearted, keen calculating men, whose minds seem pointed and polished till the material which will receive true point or polish is no more; should take up any improvement on public spirited grounds, would be as unnatural as that the system should be without numerous generous warm hearted supporters. Whether the publication stimulates patriotism, by the support of friends, or jealousy of opponents, so that correct and perfect knowledge of the system, be extended over the union, I shall consider one of the most important purposes of my life accomplished, in promoting the peace and welfare of your children. Unhappily, individuals professing to import the system from Europe, and even to give credentials to persons they have attempted to teach, have repeatedly been either ignorant of the subject, or having left Europe, some years past, are consequently strangers to all the *unprinted* improvements, made within that period of time. When I say improvements, I mean *real* ones; for pretended improvements have largely subtracted from a correct impression of the solid advantages which the system may

produce to this country. Some of the best friends of this system are convinced that nothing but an institution established under the eye, and on the responsibility of the founder, can ultimately prevent unjust estimates being formed of its nature, degrading to its character and destructive to its usefulness. I am a firm friend to improvement, but have seen, with deep sorrow, a number of cases, in which mere idle innovation was its substitute. Thus consuming to no purpose, the invaluable time of hopeful pupils, by a speculative notion, instead of a solid good. This country has no aristocracy to set its fashions, it needs not an education of show, of glitter, and parade, to give perpetuity to its liberties, or stability to plain common sense institutions. Artless as natural, simple and beautiful, as truth itself, alike without guile, or grandeur, should be the improvements required to be interwoven with your measures which will not produce a momentary effect, but as a staple article, be known, valued, and in permanent demand from intrinsic worth. Mushroom-teachers, often attain a partial knowledge of the mechanism of tuition, and *there, they* stop, seemingly unconscious that systematic principles, to be effectual, must be founded on leading inclinations of nature, and be capable of action and re-action, which will move, impress and direct the powers of mind. A gentleman once observed an acquaintance of his, take a sum of enormous length, and give the total as if by *mere* inspection, with a rapidity which seemed magical. On being asked, on what principle this most rapid calculation was grounded, he answered, "*I read it*, when you," said he, "work a sum, you add your figures together as a child spells the word "a-n-d" "and" "whereas you give the total as he pronounces the word *after* spelling it, *I read* the figures *at once* without first repeating each distinct figure." This anecdote, affords a specimen of fluency which alone can result from abundant practice. Warren Hastings, who in the sequel of his career, afforded such material for the display of Burke's eloquence in Westminster hall,—when governor of British India, paid great attention to the customs, manners, and talents of the natives. He once stated to me, that on going into a store in any of the cities of India, and asking an arithmetical ques-

tion of the first native youth, who might be at hand, a European would be answered, before he could think upon the subject, *without* the help of figures. This independence of arithmetical characters, left the calculation as remarkable for its accuracy, as for its mental operation. One cause of this proficiency among Indian youth, is peculiar to their native country. They have business to transact, and articles to buy, or sell, with a currency consisting of an immense number of little shells, called Cowries; a multitude of which are equivalent to a very small piece of coin. The operation of counting and valuing these, can only be the work of children and young persons at leisure. In thus counting cowries they become mentally familiar with large arithmetical numbers, without the help of any figure to signify the amount, and often have to give information, by memory, as to the equivalent value of different numbers, which very much accounts for their superior readiness in calculation. This fact corroborates the truth of the former anecdote, as to the rapidity which practice gives in any attainment. Astonishing as are such results in the act of demonstrative display, they are often the consequences of early, daily, and long continued practice. As with such scholars, so with teachers, they cannot be qualified in an instant, for when the powers of the mind are completely involved in subjects, to which they are directed; then alone it is, they can be effectual in their application to the instruction of others. But this is not the operation of a week, or a month, and it is as reasonable to expect that the deliberate analizing power of chymistry should *always* be the work of a short period, as to suppose, the character and qualification of a teacher on the Lancasterian system, can be produced, by *mere* superficial instruction or cursory study.

An Englishman of experience, capacity, and general intelligence, observed that till he was fifty years old, he had never once thought of the importance of education, as a general benefit to national and moral character. This may appear a solitary instance, but the gloomy darkness in which the minds of millions are still involved, proves that it is a subject, yet too much a novelty, and we have as great reason to be surprised

at the general abeyance of human intellect, as this good man professed at his own supineness. Such apathy to substantial good, is evidenced in the money lavished on sumptuous buildings, splendid fashions, luxurious tables, and even dogs and horses; when the cultivation of the mind of youth, is neglected as a matter unworthy much cost or attention. But this fault must be attributable as much to teachers, as to parents, or such a bad taste could not so long have contaminated the minds of any community. Do not these facts prove, that the "fine gold is become dim," and that a general refinement is needful, to bring forth the social talent in sterling worth? Arts and sciences have sprung to light in round numbers, an astonishing, and auspicious birth within the two last centuries! If a subject of common place convenience, exercising ingenuity in mechanics, or manufactures, is considered worthy of study, because of its general bearing? If subjects of the most exalted and comprehensive nature, that can enhance our welfare, or exercise the mind, are estimated as worthy a scientific name, surely education as a *science*, gives place to no superior, but religion, in regard to the talent it calls forth, the extensive range of subjects it embraces, or in the grandeur of the changes and results, which mark its successful progress—when will it be appreciated according to its worth? When will it be studied with an attention worthy its dignity and importance?

The man who invented the English tool for splitting straws, produced a new kind of material, for the manufacture of ladies hats, which put in requsition a large portion of industry, and called for that kind of employment, which produces most moral good, from its domestic nature. In this manufactory, ingenuity produced such a change in the material, that an article which in its raw state, was worth only twenty-five cents, often sold, when finished, at a price from six to twenty dollars. In the cotton trade, the ingenuity of an individual, enabled him, to take a pound of cotton, valued at two shillings and nine pence sterling, and manufacture therefrom an article, on a principle which combines the strength of a cable, in *proportion*, with the fineness of a thread. This cotton thread produces at market, from two to three pound sterling, per pound weight,

Steel in the mass, bears no comparison in relative value to gold, but human talent and application have fabricated watch springs and chains, worth many times their weight in gold. These are *a few* of the manifold changes produced by the ability and industry of individuals; as to the value of a raw material, that in its primitive state, may have been almost accounted, as worthless. Great as are these improvements, they are small, compared with the changes and effects produced by education. Surely then it is high time, that education should take its place in the circle of sciences, its teachers rank with professors, of the first class, and a due sense of its benefits, be engraven on every heart in order to advance the science of the human mind, which is yet in its infancy. Those men who wish to contemplate human nature in its most artless shape, must study the mind of youth at school—or at recreation,—and not speculate on man in the artificial character which society gives him;—what will be the consequence to a nation, when the teachers of its youth shall know how to read, govern and instruct the mind, by its own medium? To generate a thirst for knowledge,—to excite an interest in a second subject, by means of one totally different—giving three subjects to find a fourth, as a necessary deduction—combining oral and visual attention to instructive lessons—touching the secret springs of the human breast—and rallying all the ardour of which a warm heart is capable, in steady exertion for intellectual attainment—cherishing the spirit of enquiry—relieving the weight of study by pleasing variety of subjects, and fixing precepts worthy of remembrance, while their influence is *yet* fresh, living and breathing on the mind, are attainments which present even to those who *partially* possess them, a gratification which baffles the power of description, and leaves the name of luxury without an appropriate meaning; for the enjoyment it diffuses around—the sweet it renders sweeter, and the sweetness which it extracts from bitters, are so refined and delightful, that they can only be estimated by considering how much they cause the teacher's heart to resemble a paradise, and the school-boys, an elysium. It is mortifying to write to an intellectual friend, like thee, on an important subject, which excites every power of the mind,

to attempt description, and at the same instant find the force of expression and the treasury of words, inadequate to the attempt. But thou hast seen some specimens of the happiness I have felt among young people—thou hast seen the smiles of the heart light the eye, and brighten the countenance, flowing as freely as the tide of life, and by those partial specimens, thou canst form an idea of that feeling, which must cover the mind on a more extended scale of action, cheering the soul and interesting the intellect at every step of progress. Men who work only for show, generally rest on the surface, but those who wish to find treasure spare not to dig deep, knowing the fact to be true in mind-work, as in mineralogy, that the deeper the mine in general the better the quality of the ore. Having commenced an INSTITUTE at Baltimore, in which, my time and talents will be employed in active tuition, I shall hope, to present thee, with some gratifying fruits of my personal labor in thy own country. This Institute is likely to afford me a field of action, in which I may satisfactorily demonstrate the energies and benefits of the system. A strange notion has prevailed that the system is applicable only to the inferior branches of knowledge, but several schools in Scotland have demonstrated its successful application to Latin and Greek. A school for the children of the Jews, established in London, under the sanction of the Jewish high Priest, has demonstrated in a yet more perfect degree, its applicability to the Hebrew language. I not only have a set of *original* Latin and Hebrew lessons in my possession, but prior to my embarkation from London, visited the school, and observed, with pleasure the improvement of the pupils in the translation of their lessons from one language to another. As to living languages, the system has been successfully demonstrated in the native tongues of France, Russia, Germany, Spain, Denmark, and many other nations. Thus successful in the living and dead languages, its application on any scale of number which will admit the power of social instruction and, on any subject of a social nature, may be fairly inferred. I could offer much individual evidence as to its application to every kind of knowledge which ranks under the title of an English education, but I trust that

the demonstration, which, if properly supported, I shall be able to give at Baltimore will be superior to any other evidence.

The present subjects of tuition, in this Institute, are grammar and composition, geography, astronomy, arithmetic in its various branches, and practical geometry; book keeping and the elements of commerce, as connected with agriculture, manufactures and national resources, which depend upon the arts of life;—to which will be added, select beauties of style, rhetoric and elocution, exemplified from the best writers and orators; but in future we hope to embrace a more copious range of studies which are ultimately likely, by the system of this Institute, to trace out the footsteps of wisdom to recipient youth, make the path of science plain, and improve the powers of mind, by exertions made for mental acquisition. The hand writing of school exercises has been generally neglected, and the task only regarded; thus detracting from one attainment, to increase another. System is only needed, to render such exercises much more profitable, as both the subject and the excellence with which it is written may be rendered simultaneous objects. In unfolding the ample page of history, "rich with the spoils of time," its connexion with geography, ancient and modern, will be closely marked, as affording to local description, the power of general interest. Readings, recitations, lectures accompanied by questions and original illustrations, are already in use, "to teach the young idea, how to shoot" and "pour the fresh instruction o'er the mind." For whether the treasures of nature, the divisions of the earth, or the beauties of the Heavens are displayed, care will be taken to suit the communications to the juvenile capacity,—to render study active as well as pleasing and to allure to knowledge by its own interesting loveliness. Health is promoted by blending personal exercises with school duties peculiar to the Institute. As the human voice gathers strength, when trained to proper and distinct enunciation, means conducive to this object, will be comprised in the routine of school avocations. The coruscations of mind among the most eminent writers, and orators, will be collected and exhibited in their beauty, strength, and precision. Biographical examples will form a portion of instruction in order, more power-

fully to impress the mind with useful truths, and display in lovely contrast, the precepts of wisdom, as "apples of gold in pictures of silver." The beauties of elocution, will only be exemplified for purposes congenial to virtue and human happiness,—to lessen the weight of other studies, by an impressive variety, which at once relieves attention, and stimulates exertion. As the light is not lessened by the variegated tints of its resplendence, retaining its own brightness, while it spreads a smile over the face of all nature; so the radient powers of language will not be devoted to empty show, but employed to enhance in the mind of the pupil, that true splendour, which alone attends subjects of real good, and solid utility.

The Institute is intended at present, to embrace only two departments of education; the Seminary for girls will be under the immediate care of my only daughter, to whom I shall render occasional assistance. The boys will constantly be under my own superintendance, in which I anticipate considerable aid from the active services of two highly esteemed young friends with whom I have been acquainted from early life, and during our friendship have had cause to be gratified with their love of honor and virtue. But their valuable services will not lessen my personal exertions, to demonstrate those improvements which will fully adopt the system to the genius and youth of this nation; I hope to witness in this city, two other branches of the Institute, which will afford a perfect model of the system in elementary schools for youth of both sexes. My design is to add to the preceding branches a seminary for teachers, not forgetting the poor Indians.

Independent of these measures, I propose admitting a select class of boys, as boarders in my family; these pupils will dine at the same table, and be very much the companions of my domestic life, receiving their private lessons from myself and friends. The boarders will attend the superior school, at the regular hours, and thus enjoy the guarded care of domestic education, combined with the emulation of a public school. This class will be select and worthy companions of the pupils now in the Institute, who are orderly and well-behaved youth.

In future I intend to travel only in vacations, *then* I shall not forget Williamsburg.

Thou wilt perceive in my letter to Henry Clay, as well as in the letters addressed to thyself, that the feeling which I wish to see cherished among the rising race, is, that of personal independence, combined with a knowledge of the capacity, peculiar advantages and destiny of their country. Make education cheap, good, and easily attainable in the elementary schools, and those who need it, will generally be willing to pay the expense. Let superior schools deserve the name, and render the price moderate, compared with the quality and species of tuition, then the degrading spirit of pauperism, and free charity schools, *indispensable* to the old countries, from the effects of their political institutions, will be avoided in this land of freedom. Pay schools of any description can only maintain themselves for a length of time, from the assiduity of their teachers and the self-evident improvement of the scholars. Some persons expect system *alone*, to produce effects, with the quickness and parade of magic illusion; but forget that with all tools, however excellent, the strength, skill, and industry of the workman, are indispensable requisites to their successful application. It is a singular thing, that coinage, though a legal right, in most countries, has something republican in its nature. The inferior orders of coin having their equivalent place, value, and *representation* in the superior denominations, whether Louisdores sovereigns or eagles. Now if in a pound of silver money, one grain of gold, should be intermixed, such is its divisibility, that it would be equally divided in the whole mass. Were a single grain taken away from it, after the gold was mixed, such grain of silver would contain its equal proportion of a single grain of gold.* Thus it is comparatively, that knowledge, diffused among a nation, in equal quantity, enhances the value, increases the purity of the mass, but often remains dormant and unseen, till some occasion calls it forth. Great changes and events, throw an extraordinary stimulant into society, and call forth

* The five thousand seven hundred and sixtieth part of a grain of gold, mixed with one grain of silver.

the display of latent energies, and the might of hidden talent; so aqua fortis, applied to a pound of silver money, will extricate a solitary grain of gold, however diffused—precipitate it by gravity to the bottom of the menstruum, and leave it there, possessing its own superior value, and invincible nature. Thus trying times and suffering dispensations, bring forth a nations virtues in purity, demonstrating in the operation and effect, that "knowledge is power."

The diamond mines of Brazil, were only discovered in 1730, before that period, numbers of persons had taken up rough diamonds—admired them as pretty pebbles—and then coolly threw them away. Thus perhaps having the value of millions sterling in their hands, and for want of a little of that knowledge, which ought to be the birth-right and possession of *every* child in this nation—they allowed the invaluable treasure to slip between their fingers; the king of Portugal, exercising his *regal* right, marched soldiers to the mines, took possession of the riches and monopolizing the treasures, received among others, *one* diamond, weighing 12½ ounces, and valued at 224,000,000 *l.* sterling—which now adorns the Portuguese crown.

Thus *ignorance* has often left mental gems of unspeakable brilliancy and worth, useless to the world, as if shedding "their purest ray serene" at the bottom of the mighty ocean: yet these treasures of a nation, constitute the hope of intellectual strength, the true glory of rising greatness. Shall the youth of this country then be neglected even *partially?* Ask the mountains, and let every little hill re-echo with ten thousand voices the answer—"No!" Ask the Mississippi, the Lakes, the Seas, and their tributary streams, and forget not Niagara's falls: hear them answer, with the voice of many waters—"No!" Does not every pulse that beats in any bosom where patriotism has a shelter, an abiding place; response its vivid negative, while the gentle mother and lisping infant unite to whisper—"No!" Is not the out-stretched hand of Heavens' benevolence made bare to place a blessing, with its everlasting fiat, upon every thing that shall stand opposed to ignorance, or interpose a benignant negation to this power of darkness?

Hear then, O Columbia! The voice of one that loves thee,—thy friends, and thy children!—That great, awful, and sovereign power, who dwelleth in light, and extendeth his hand filled with goodness to cherish and prosper every virtuous endeavor among individuals, or nations, standeth ready to consecrate, as sacred, that patriotism, which once rallied under the banners of knowledge, will lead your sons and daughters from strength to strength, from earth to Heaven, from "nature up to nature's God."

Then shall peace be within thy walls, prosperity within thy palaces, all they shall prosper, that love thee!

Then shall thy childrens' interests shine on thy bosom and be thy crown, superior to brilliant jewels, set in native gold!

But what are jewels of earthly form, compared with these of Heavenly origin? What are all the fading splendors of regal pomp, compared with the intellectual value of *one* of *thy* sons, or daughters. Are not thy children, like, but superior to diamonds of purest water, which shineing by their own light, even in darkness, *true* polish only discovering greater worth,—more transcendent beauty!

"I will lay thy stones with fair colars and thy foundations with saphires, thy gates shall be agate, thy walls carbuncle, and all thy borders, precious stones."

May this Oh! highly favoured nation, be thy experience, in a mental and illustrious sense, and may thy children, sons and daughters, smiling with innocence, lovely in unity, regulated by the fear of God, and clothed in the light of knowledge, rise up to call thee blessed; be written on thy heart and appear brighter than stars in thy crown.

And now my honored friend, Burwell Bassett, I have done my duty by thy country, accept the friendly wish of my heart for thyself—may

"The soul's calm sunshine and the heart felt joy—
True virtuous prize"——

continue long to be thy chief desire, and unfading portion—may peace from Heaven, abide in thy habitation, attend thee "all the days that the Lord thy God giveth thee," and when the solemn close of time shall come, may the evening of thy

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